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Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013

Situation of human rights in Myanmar

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.55

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

I. Requests contained in the draft resolution

1. Under the terms of paragraph 33 of draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.55, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General:

(a) To continue to provide his good offices and to pursue his discussions on the situation of human rights, the transition to democracy and the national reconciliation process with the Government and the people of Myanmar, involving all relevant stakeholders, including democracy and human rights groups, and to offer technical assistance to the Government in this regard;

(b) To give all necessary assistance to enable the Special Adviser and the Special Rapporteur to discharge their mandates fully, effectively and in a coordinated manner;

(c) To report to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session, as well as to the Human Rights Council, on the progress made in the implementation of that resolution.

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II. Relationship of the proposed requests to the strategic framework for the period 2012-2013

2. The foregoing requests relate to subprogramme 1, Prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, of programme 2, Political affairs, and subprogramme 3, Advisory services, technical cooperation and field activities, and subprogramme 4, Supporting the Human Rights Council, its subsidiary bodies and mechanisms, of programme 19, Human rights, of the strategic framework for the period 2012-2013 (A/65/6/Rev.1).

III. Activities by which the requests would be implemented

3. In his report to the General Assembly (A/66/267), the Secretary-General outlined his continued broad-based consultations with the authorities and key stakeholders, including democracy and human rights groups, as well as key Member States, with regard to implementation of the good offices mandate.

4. The Secretary-General recognizes the significance of developments in Myanmar since the November 2010 elections. The United Nations is committed to a policy of comprehensive engagement with the Government and people of Myanmar under the three pillars of political, humanitarian and development assistance. Over the past year, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General visited Myanmar three times at the invitation of the Government: in November 2010 following the elections and the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi; in May 2011 following the establishment of the new civilian Government and the announcement by President Thein Sein of a reform agenda; and in November 2011 following the new steps taken in the implementation of reforms, national dialogue and reconciliation. Each visit of the Special Adviser was followed by continuation of the political process and economic reform, including the release of political prisoners. The visits also served to clarify the developments and challenges ahead for more effective cooperation in implementing the objectives of the mandate of the Special Adviser. The Special Adviser has encouraged the authorities to reach out as broadly as possible to all stakeholders, including those not represented in Parliament, to consolidate Myanmar's efforts towards democratic transition, national reconciliation and respect for human rights. The Special Adviser emphasized that it was important for the new Government to be proactive in political reforms. The Special Adviser stressed the need for Myanmar to respond to overtures by the donor community and to build on the efforts of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the United Nations Development Programme and other development partners. The Special Adviser also encouraged the authorities to reach out to the international community and to engage more openly and regularly with the good offices of the Secretary-General.

5. Notwithstanding recent positive developments, the political, human rights, development and humanitarian problems facing Myanmar remain. Of equal concern are ongoing tensions and armed conflict with some armed ethnic groups. The continued detention of remaining political prisoners remains of deepest concern to the United Nations and the international community. If not properly managed, the stresses and expectations inherent to any transition could exacerbate rather than resolve existing problems.

6. The General Assembly's support for the existing capacity of the good offices of the Secretary-General will therefore remain important in order to help the Government and other stakeholders maximize the opportunities for greater democratization and national reconciliation through an inclusive political process. Member States have a shared stake in the success of the current process to result in a credible transition that can contribute to the country's stability and development. The reform agenda and transition process offers a chance for a better understanding between Myanmar and the international community, and provides an opportunity for greater cooperation between Myanmar and the United Nations in the interest of the people of Myanmar.

7. Moving forward, the Secretary-General will continue to work with all concerned to support the efforts of the Government and the people of Myanmar towards national reconciliation, the transition to democracy and full respect for human rights, as the necessary foundation for long-term stability and prosperity.

8. Consistent with the requests contained in paragraph 33 of draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.55, the efforts of the Secretary-General would continue in 2012 to provide his good offices and to pursue his discussions on the situation of human rights, the transition to democracy and the national reconciliation process with the Government and the people of Myanmar, involving all relevant stakeholders, including democracy and human rights groups, and to offer technical assistance in that regard. The efforts of his good offices would be carried out through his Special Adviser and his team. The progress made in the implementation of the resolution would be reported to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session.

IV. Estimated resource requirements

9. The estimated costs of continuing the efforts of the good offices of the Secretary-General to facilitate the process of national reconciliation and democratization through his Special Adviser for Myanmar, as requested in paragraph 33 of draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.55, for a one-year period, from 1 January to 31 December 2012, amount to $1,200,500 net ($1,358,100 gross).

10. Those resources would cover the salaries of the Special Adviser (USG) and four staff (2 P-4, 1 P-3 and 1 General Service (Other level)); the official travel of the Special Adviser to Myanmar, neighbouring countries in the region, Europe and North America, including United Nations Headquarters; the services of consultants; and miscellaneous services in support of his mission. Other substantive and administrative support to the Special Adviser would be provided by the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat.

11. The above requirements have been included in the report of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/66/354/Add.1 and Corr.1), and would be charged against the provision for special political missions included under section 3, Political affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013.

12. With regard to the request contained in the latter part of paragraph 33 (b), pertaining to the Special Rapporteur, the related requirements are considered of a perennial nature. As such, a provision of an estimated $70,200 per annum to

implement the activities of the Special Rapporteur has been made, under section 23, Human rights, of the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011 and under section 24, Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013.

13. At this juncture, no additional resources are requested for section 24, Human rights, beyond those reflected above.

V. Summary

14. **Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.55, additional requirements amounting to $1,200,500 net ($1,358,100 gross) would be required for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2012 for the continuation of the efforts of the good offices of the Secretary-General relating to the situation in Myanmar.**

15. **These requirements would be charged against the provision for special political missions under section 3, Political affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013. Approval for these requirements is being sought in the context of the report of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/66/354/Add.1 and Corr.1) currently before the Assembly for consideration during the main part of its sixty-sixth session.**